DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 580 FL 024 955

AUTHOR	Cowie, Neil
TITLE	Cooperative Development: Professional Self-Development for Language Teachers through Cooperation with a Colleague.
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	23p.
PUB TYPE	Journal Articles (080) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	Saitama University Review; v32 n1 p121-41 1996
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Observation Techniques; College Faculty; *Cooperation; English (Second Language); Faculty Development; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Instructional Improvement; *Language Teachers; *Peer Influence; *Peer Relationship; Personal Narratives; *Professional Development; Second Language Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	Japan

ABSTRACT

This article describes the implementation of the cooperative development (CD) technique by two professors at a Japanese university. With this technique, colleagues work together by adopting the roles of "speaker" and "understander" to support each other's process of addressing teaching concerns. The skills required for CD include exploration (subdivided into attending, reflecting, and focusing, skills for the understander to use in supporting the speaker), discovery (divided into thematizing, challenging, and disclosing), and action (including goal-setting, trialling, and planning) for instructional change. The report describes the institutional and classroom context of the work, outlines the principles and procedures of CD, analyzes the most interesting aspects of what was accomplished, and evaluates the CD process by summarizing key learning experiences and making suggestions for further improvement. Meetings between the two colleagues were taped and transcribed, and some excerpts are included here. (Contains 13 references). (MSE)

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COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT : PROFESSIONAL SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS THROUGH COOPERATION WITH A COLLEAGUE

NEIL COWIE

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Neil Cowie

Saitama University Review, Vol.32 (No1), 1996
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Saitama University

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Cooperative Development: professional self-development for language teachers through cooperation with a colleague

Neil Cowie

1:0 Introduction

Edge, in his book, *'Cooperative Development'* (1992), describes a way in which two teachers could cooperate in order to help each other develop professionally. Edge recommends that colleagues can work together by adopting the artificial roles of *'speaker'* and *'understander'*. The aim of this role playing is for the understander to support and guide the speaker, so that the speaker can become more aware of how to further their own professional self-development. In order to be effective in these two roles, Edge encourages participants to develop skills *"to discover their own ways of gaining more satisfaction from their teaching"*. In other words Cooperative Development (CD) is a practical guide to professional self-development for language teachers.

In this paper I would like to show how my colleague, Andy Hoodith (AH), and I attempted to work together to master the skills of CD. I will do this in three ways:

1. Briefly describe the background and context of our work together.
2. Analyse what I feel are the most interesting points that we discovered from each of the CD skills.
3. Evaluate the CD process by summarising what I think were the key learning experiences, and make suggestions for future development.

In this description and evaluation I will try to incorporate the findings and recommendations of the existing literature where relevant. However, the main evidence for my argument will be the experiential knowledge that AH and I gained by working together. In doing this I hope this paper will achieve two things: act as a first report on my initial experiences of CD, with the hope that, at a later stage, I can report on future progress; and, give fellow teachers an insight into CD which may spark an interest in it as a potential way to develop professionally.

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2:0 Background

In this section I will briefly describe AH's and my experience of teaching, teacher development and our current teaching situation, in order to provide a context for how we approached CD.

I am currently teaching six lessons a week to undergraduates at Saitama University (Faculty of Liberal Arts). I have the freedom to design my own curricula for these courses, but this positive point is in contrast to the isolation, and lack of interaction with colleagues, that I sometimes feel. Before this post I had worked in private language schools, and another university. My total teaching experience is about 7 years, most of which has been in Japan. Since starting teaching I have developed mainly by myself through experience and through reading teaching books. I have shared ideas with colleagues in an 'ad hoc' manner, but have only rarely consciously *'formulated'* and *'expressed my ideas'* (Edge, 1992: 8).

AH teaches at the same university, but in a different faculty with an older and more international group of students. He has been an English teacher for about 13 years, in more countries than myself, and in more senior teaching positions. His teacher education and development experience is also wider than my own: one noticeable difference between us is that he has observed other teachers, and been observed teaching, far more often than I have.

In order to practice the initial skill development activities we met 10 times in 7 weeks in AH's office, which was perhaps not neutral ground, but was the most convenient location for both of us. One disadvantage was that we tended to get interrupted fairly frequently, with the result that, although we tried to talk for an hour during each meeting, the actual time 'on task' was frequently less. I taped and transcribed every meeting, except the first (on the skill of 'attending'), and one other (on 'thematising'). In retrospect it would have been extremely useful to have kept a journal of the experience as well, but unfortunately I did not. My comments on the CD process are therefore a mixture of reflection after doing all the skills, and a conscious attempt to remember how I felt at the time of doing each one.

3:0 Analysis of the skills of CD

Edge describes three broad groups of CD skills: *'exploration'*, *'discovery' and 'action'*, which in turn are each divided in to three, giving nine different skills in all. For each skill there are a number of activities, or tasks, designed to encourage development of the skill. Some of these activities are directly related to teaching, whilst others are broader in application. All activities, however, lay emphasis on learning through doing, and specifically, learning through expressing one's ideas. It is this expression of one's own ideas which is central to CD, and is basically what the skills are designed to improve. Rather than, for example, having a discussion or conversation about teaching, the speaker and understander will talk in an essentially controlled and artificial manner, so that one person (the speaker) may develop their own ideas, with the understander acting as a guide and support. The discourse of CD is therefore very different from 'conversation' in that it has different 'rules' and interactional skills which need to be learnt and practised.

In the sections below I will try to briefly show how the activities that Edge describes contribute to acquiring the rules and interactional skills of CD. AH and I did not do all of the activities, but we attempted something from each area, choosing what we felt was most relevant or interesting. After each heading are the chapter reference numbers of each activity that we did attempt. In *Appendix 1* is an example of one of the activities that will give a fuller flavour of what is entailed than is possible in this brief summary[3].

I shall also try to point out what I learnt from the activities about teacher development, and the CD process itself. I shall concentrate my remarks on the CD process, in order to show how successful we were in acquiring the skills, and to evaluate what outcomes we achieved. I use the word 'we', because it was a cooperative enterprise, but of course the findings of this paper are my own. In *Appendix 2* is a brief summary of what AH thought about CD to provide a comparison with my interpretation. I shall illustrate some of my points with quotes from the transcripts. Such excerpts will necessarily be decontextualised because I cannot include all the discourse as it is over 100 pages long. However, *Appendix 3* provides one longer excerpt from one meeting, which will, I hope, provide a better moving picture of the process compared to the snapshots that I quote below.

4:0 Exploration

"Exploration covers the three skills of 'attending', 'reflecting', and 'focusing. These abilities on the part of the Understander are meant to encourage the Speaker in the exploration of the topic that the Speaker has decided to work on". (Edge, 1992: 21)

4:1 Attending (5.1; 5.2; 5.6)

The attending exercises are designed to encourage active listening, and proved to be an excellent introduction to the CD process. There is a discussion of body postures and a 'mirroring' activity, for example, that are quite common teaching activities that most teachers would find familiar and reassuring as an 'ice-breaker'. One point I learnt, and was conscious of in subsequent meetings, was that I did try to mirror AH's posture and I became more aware of when he was, or was not, mirroring me. Throughout the CD process I tried to act like a positive and active listener, and an important part of that is to be aware of what messages your posture and body language may be sending to your colleague.

4.2 Reflecting (6.1; 6.4)

Reflecting is an extension of attending in that it is a way for the understander to show how they can be an '*active*' listener. One way to do this, for example, is for the understander to reflect the speaker's ideas back to them as a form of comprehension check, so that the speaker can confirm, or not, that they are actually getting their ideas across accurately. This unit was our first attempt at taking on the roles of 'speaker' and 'understander' and after a period before this meeting of thinking and talking about the roles this was a chance to actually play them. This clearly showed me that 'doing' is definitely different from 'knowing'(Rogers, 1983: 19), and that CD has to be experienced rather than just talked or read about.

At this very early stage we tacitly decided to take it in turns to be the speaker and understander, which is a departure from the 'rules' of CD. I think it is an interesting issue which I will address in the evaluation section below. Our talk had a lot of commentary on what exactly the rules were. For example:

NC: *right but would you agree that um this understanding or reflecting is a*

comprehension check rather than you're not trying to ask the person questions particularly (2.0) you're checking them so they almost elicit their own response

AH: *I mean I can comment*

NC: *I think this is what is going to be hard is not to respond in a sort of helpful way or a way to*

AH: *so a response would be (3.0) so the students don't like group work then right that*

NC: *that's a good one that's paraphrasing that and perhaps leading on to well you're right there blah blah*

I found it very difficult, as the understander, to concentrate on anything other than the skill I was trying to learn ie, I was so intent on trying to 'reflect', that I was not very aware of the topic we were looking at. As we went through the activities I found that this pattern repeated itself, and it has taken me a long time to look beyond the skill being acquired. The antithesis of this, is that the speaker does not have to worry about the skills, and is free to focus on their own development issues, which is at the heart of CD.

4.3 Focusing (7.1 7.5)

Focusing is a way for the understander to take the speaker's ideas one step further towards action. The understander can do this either by eliciting a focus, or by directly providing one. One very interesting technique for doing this that Edge describes is to use a 'focusing circle', in which the speaker draws a series of circles, each of which focuses more and more closely on a point of interest. At the same time as drawing and writing in the circles, the speaker gives a running commentary on what s/he is doing. I found that this activity was extremely good to force me to explain my thoughts clearly, and to allow AH the chance to follow my ideas in a way not possible in 'normal' note taking. I am sure this type of activity could also be used by students to help them become aware of how they may, or may not be, making themselves clear in a language lesson. Many of the CD activities are clearly transferable to the classroom, and I think this point could perhaps be made more explicit in the book: as a potential way of including one's learners in the development process, and as a resource of teaching activities.

In this activity, when I was speaker, I found that AH was definitely trying to practise the understanding role, but he still wanted to make suggestions, or offer examples of his own. Such advice is not a part of the understanding role, and is perhaps one of the hardest interactional rules to learn. For example:

(1) AH: *do you think it would be worth perhaps not all the students but photocopying stuff with your comments on*
(2) AH: *the peer stuff (2.0) my situation's a bit different*
(3) AH: *I think the other topic would be easier to do to be honest with you it would be more straightforward*

This brings up a recurring question in the CD process: if the speaker is to come to their own understanding of their own development, is there a place for the understander's suggestions in the process ? At this stage, though I felt grateful for the advice (some of AH's suggestions were very good ones) I still felt a little begrudging because my colleague was not 'playing by the rules', but at this stage I did not have the confidence to say that to him directly.

5.0 Discovery

"Discovery involves the three moves of 'thematising', 'challenging', and 'disclosing'. These involve linking ideas which are initially separate...and are more overtly active and interventionist than the earlier abilities." (Edge, 1992: 45).

5.1 Thematising (8.1)

Thematising is the first of the three discovery skills, all of which try to draw together points the speaker has made: in this case to try to express some kind of thematic relationship. Unfortunately I did not (successfully) record our attempts at thematising. In any case this was the briefest meeting that we had, with the result that we were not very successful at acquiring the skill because we did not spend very much time on it. Part of the reason for this is that we felt that the thematising activities did not look as interesting as the 'challenging' ones that followed, and so we preferred to move on to them.

5.2 Challenging (9.1; 9.2; 9.3)

Challenging involves the understander in trying to help the speaker reconcile ideas which may be inconsistent or unclear. It is not a way for the understander to 'score points', but it is potentially a threatening move and is difficult to do successfully. At this stage AH was again trying very hard to be a supportive understander, but was still keen to put over his personal opinions, which as I stated earlier are not part of the understander's role, but are for the speaker to express. For example:

(1) AH: *I think it's a two way street personally*

(2) AH: *what er so what I'm not so sure to what extent (2.0) there is an average Japanese student but I think that some Japanese students don't actually get the deal*

(3) AH: *I mean the most explicit I've got is with Krashen's monitor theory*

During the talk I was aware of this 'unsanctioned' switching of roles, as the following excerpt illustrates:

(4) AH: *can I be the speaker about number two number two*
NC: *well I thought you were the speaker about B but carry on in your role and I'll carry on as an understander* (laughs)
AH: *right I'm going to limit this now*

In fairness to AH, I also switched role without explaining that I was doing so explicitly. I think that giving a commentary on the interaction is not something we did very much of, except during the earlier activities (see 4.2 above). At the time this may have been because we felt comfortable with the way we were progressing, but with hindsight I think more clarification of roles was necessary. At the beginning of each activity I would try to summarise what we were supposed to be doing, but I do not think that I did this explicitly enough, with the result that AH did not stick as strictly to an understander role as I would have liked. I think that it would have been an advantage to have had another colleague present to act as an '*observer*', in order to identify such issues, and be in a position to express them to both participants. Edge, in fact, does introduce the role of observer to help speaker and understander improve their skills, in particular by leading feedback discussions on the interaction.

Two relatively obvious, but until that time unspoken observations, that resulted from the challenging activities were: the CD process gives us a *'framework'* to be objective about our work; and, we were unsure as to whether the process could work when status relationships were *unequal*. We felt that CD has to be a voluntary process, or at least one that was not imposed from above, otherwise there would be too many 'hidden agendas' for participants to have sufficient trust in each other. This is an important issue for teachers when deciding who it is possible to do CD with: probably the most important decision of the whole process.

5.3 Disclosing

Disclosing is a way for the understander to reveal some part of their own experience to the speaker, in order to help the speaker clarify their own ideas. This should not mean, however, that the understander's ideas become the focus of interaction. We chose to try and practice disclosing by talking about how the CD process had affected us thus far. Although I found that skills such as thematising and challenging were relatively easy to identify, if not always to put into practice, I found disclosing extremely difficult, both conceptually and practically. I think it is extremely difficult to try to clarify the speaker's view with one's own experiences, without it coming over as opinion, advice or suggestion. Perhaps my earlier reservations about AH's advice are not so valid if one views them as his way of disclosing.

As a result of our disclosing talk we felt it would be a good idea for the initial 'reflecting' activity (activity 6.1 in the book) to revolve around our real teaching, or teacher development experiences, rather than being based on general situations that we could certainly recognise, but found difficult to relate to. At the time of doing activity 6.1 we thought the statements were difficult to use as a springboard for discussion, but it was not until we had been through several other chapters that we could concretely offer something else. As a general observation, we found it easier to discuss the teaching based activities, and activities based on personal experience, rather than the broader ones, or ones which did not explicitly ask for a personal view. However, if one were doing CD with a partner that one did not know too well it may be safer to start with less threatening, more neutral activities, rather than ones which invite personal opinions or experiences.

6.0 Action

"The whole purpose of Cooperative Development is to act. The final turn towards action involves 'goal setting', 'trialling' and 'planning'." (Edge, 1992:65).

6.1 Goal Setting(11.1)

The skill of goal setting is to move the talk on towards some sort of action through specification of behaviour. We chose to do this through activity 11.1, which has a series of open ended statements eg, *" one technique I would like to try out with my class is..." "one type of activity I think my students learn a lot from is..."* These are deceptively simple statements, but they make a very compact 'needs analysis' questionnaire which is not only very helpful in setting goals, but could also be used directly in the classroom, by changing the words teacher and teaching, to student and learning.

As might be expected, some specific proposals came from this activity. Firstly, I resolved to both observe, and be observed by, AH in the classroom. Secondly, I decided to try to find out from colleagues what the content of 'Japanese Studies' university courses was, in order to see what light they could shed on my own courses in 'British Studies'. It was not until I did CD that I realised that these (British Studies) were my most challenging classes. This is another simple truth: that sometimes, it is not until one talks about an issue, perhaps in a new way, that the glaringly obvious comes in to view.

AH also set some goals for himself. One was to try to expose his students to more varieties of English than they were currently getting. A first step to achieve this goal was to invite me to a rehearsal for a presentation by one of AH's students: I would get to observe my colleague's lesson, and the students would have a chance to be exposed, in a limited way, to another variety of English. Our reactions to this event formed a large part of the subsequent meetings on trialling and planning.

6.2 Trialling (12.1)

Trialling is an opportunity to talk through step by step what actions the speaker wishes to take once they have set themselves a goal. Our trialling meeting immediately

followed watching the presentation rehearsal by AH's student, which we had agreed as the goal from activity 11.1.1 acted as the understander aiming to get AH to trial what he would do in response to the presentation. This was an extremely fruitful meeting, as we had the opportunity to focus on an immediate teaching issue, resulting from a lesson in which we had both just taken part.

I think that by this stage I was comfortable with the role of understander, and had made some progress in the skills involved, for example, in goal setting, as I hope the following extract illustrates:

NC: *right right (3.0) so just to recap then you're gonna presumably after Christmas when you've had time to think about it come up with these two papers probably or just the one feedback sheet*
AH: *well the pre one I've already done*
NC: *yeah*
AH: *and I'm gonna improve that*
NC: *so when are you gonna have a chance to practice using this particular feedback sheet (2.0)*
AH: *it'll be about the third week of January*

6.3 Planning

Planning is the final stage of CD, where the participants decide for themselves how they would like to continue the process. As a way of practising the planning skill we tried, firstly, to reflect on what we had learnt from our talks so far, and then to decide how we would carry on in the future. The following are some of the main points we made.

1. AH concluded that CD had been of benefit to him, because it was a way of looking at teacher development that he had not experienced before. Although he was initially reticent about playing a role, and although he felt we did not actually 'do' the roles particularly well, this was not a problem to him because he thought that we had saved time by going straight to important issues rather than role playing. He felt another important point was that CD provided both a framework within which to work, and the motivation to devote time to development.
2. I reflected that for me, what was most interesting about CD was the difference

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between *'ordinary'* conversation, and the interaction when taking on the speaker and understander roles. Lansley (1994) also focuses on this difference, and for him it is important to know whether one method of interaction is better than another at developing teachers. It is an extremely difficult business to assess whether one teacher is 'better' than another, but I think it is an important question to ask anyway. I think a possible line of future research is to try to compare CD with other methods of teacher development to see if the differences in interactional style do produce different outcomes. As a possible extension of this I am very interested in comparing doing CD with colleagues from a different culture (probably Japan) to see if there are any meaningful intercultural differences.

3. Whilst doing the CD activities I was not at all sure as to whether I had actually improved my interactional skills, or whether I had the confidence to use them in other situations. However, I did have a chance to show to myself that I had acquired some skills when I was trying to do one of the 'challenging' activities with another teacher (from another institution) who had not done the activities before. He found it extremely difficult to be an understander, or to believe that I was not criticising his particular view; whereas I felt I was using the skills appropriately to help him develop, and was not focusing on my own issues. This is where I feel doing the CD process with, or being advised by, someone who has been through it once already would be very helpful. This is similar to schemes for 'in-service development' where experienced teachers can act as 'mentors' to trainee teachers (see Moon, 1994; McClain, 1995). I think the book itself does not offer such advice because it is in keeping with the philosophy of learning for oneself, but I think at times some reassurance, either from another person or from the text itself, would be extremely valuable.

4. AH and I planned to meet weekly to continue the CD process, and to make a presentation related to CD at the next JALT (Japanese Association of Language Teachers) conference. I think, therefore, we have strong intrinsic and extrinsic reasons to make sure we continue to build on what we have started.

7.0 Summary and evaluation of the key learning experiences from CD

The following are some of the learning points from my experience of CD. They are divided into three areas: ways in which I would change what we did; my reaction to the process; and issues that CD raised concerning my development as a teacher.

7.1 Suggestions for change

I enjoyed the experience of CD and found it very rewarding, and I believe that I now have a good overview of what it is about, but I know I am only just beginning to feel comfortable with this way of working. Below are outlined several practical ways in which I think I can improve:

1. In order to keep track of my development I need to keep a *learning journal or diary* (see Bailey, 1990) of the main points from each meeting. Although taping and transcribing was useful it was just too time consuming to be practical in the long term. A potential research avenue that I am currently looking at is to see how feasible it is to compare CD journals with other teachers with whom one is not actually doing the CD process. Another area is to see if it is possible to do CD by 'e-mail', rather than face to face.
2. We did not have anyone to act as an '*observer*', but if we had I feel it would have changed (improved?) the interaction considerably. I have discovered issues, from my analysis of the transcriptions, that I would have liked to have brought in to the meetings to discuss. Perhaps some of these issues would have been noticed by an observer, who could have introduced them into the interaction at the time they arose. As a result of this reflection, I would like, in the future, to introduce, an observer into the interaction to see if this can improve our cooperative skills.
3. I think that we need to consciously make more '*metacomments*' on our interaction, in order to make explicit our expectations of the roles, and 'rules', of CD. Connected to this we did, however, adopt a useful protocol for making suggestions, or giving opinions, by saying such things as:

NC: *stepping out of my understander role here I would just like to say*

However, I think that this is actually quite distracting, so it may be more useful to have time set aside at the end of the meeting, specifically for advice and opinions, as described by McClain (1995) in her article on 'peer mentoring' groups.

7.2 My reaction to the process of CD

For me, one paradox of CD is that great emphasis is placed on the understander helping the speaker to develop. Of course the understander will also develop, but their primary

purpose should be to facilitate the speaker's growth. And this is where the paradox comes in, because the skills that CD tries to encourage are in fact the skills of the understander. In many ways the speaker does not have to 'do' anything because all the active development is by the understander. I think implicit in a relationship of 'respect', 'empathy' and 'trust' (Edge, 1992: 11) should be the opportunity to take on the different roles, but this freedom to change roles is not made so clear in the CD text. This led me to a second paradox: this was initially '*my*' project, and so perhaps sub-consciously I realised that the understander was the more demanding role, and so I took on that role more often even if it led to my talking less than AH. I feel I grew more as an understander than as a speaker, and so in the future I need to make sure that I have more opportunities to be a speaker.

Of the skills, I found the 'action' ones to be the easiest to learn, perhaps because they are closest to what a teacher does much of the time. The 'exploration' skills were familiar as those of a 'good' listener, which a teacher should be, and so were also not too difficult to relate to. However, it was the middle group of 'discovery' skills which I found hardest to master. One possible focus for this is to try to improve my ability to ask 'high yield' questions as described by Underhill (1993: 185), as I think these are particularly appropriate for the skills of discovery.

7.3 Teacher Development

I have found that, so far, the direct effect of CD on my development as a teacher has not been that great. This is probably because I have been concentrating on 'the skills' themselves rather than my own development: it is almost as though I have been learning to drive, and I have a map, but I have not yet begun the journey proper. However, I have found a colleague with whom I feel comfortable enough to use CD as a tool to further my own development, and in terms of specific outcomes I have now observed one of AH's lessons, and he will visit me in the future, which will perhaps lead to some team teaching. Those are big steps for me in my current, relatively isolated, situation.

8.0 Conclusion

In this paper I have shown how my colleague and I helped each other to try to acquire the skills of CD, as described by Edge (1992). The programme of structured activities,

within the framework of the roles of speaker and understander, enabled us to interact professionally in a way neither of us had experienced before ie, the 'reflective model' of Wallace (1991: 6), or the 'reflective teaching' of Bartlett (1990: 203). I found the process challenging, but at times difficult and frustrating, as the skills do not promote a balance of discoursal interaction, which can be disconcerting. The process, however, was conducted in a spirit of equality, which is perhaps not so characteristic of more traditional models of teacher education such as the 'craft' and 'applied science' models that Wallace also describes. I believe that I did make progress at the skills of CD, particularly as an understander, and feel confident that I will build on this in the future to further my self-development, or as Underhill (1992: 79) says:

"No one else can do it (development) for us, though other people can be indispensable in helping us to do it."

Acknowledgement:

I would very much like to thank Andy Hoodith for agreeing to take part in CD with me, and then being as good as his word in carrying out the process with intelligence, insight and humour. I would also like to thank Andy for his comments on this paper.

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Appendix 1

The following is an example of one the 'reflecting' activities from ***Cooperative Development*** *(Edge J. 1992). It is not exactly as printed in the book but was adopted for a workshop in CD for language teachers. However, it should give a flavour of the kind of activity in the book.*

Task 1. Useful Language

The understander will try to reflect back the ideas of the Speaker, so that the Speaker can get a clearer view of these ideas. This does not mean that the Understander should interprete or explain those ideas, but it is more on the lines of: this is what I hear; this is what I understand - is that right?

Below is some language that may be helpful when trying to reflect. Can you add any more phrases with your partner?

* Just a minute, let me see if I've got this right.....
* OK, what I hear you saying is this.....
* Can I just check something with you.....
* So, if I'm understanding you properly.....
* Right, so it looks like this.....

2. Individual Task

Now, complete the following sentences for yourself. In a minute you'll be asked to talk about them.

* As a teacher, the type of activity I most enjoy is.....
* As a teacher, the type of activity I least enjoy is.....

* One aspect of my teaching that I am really pleased with is.....
* The kind of student I'm best with is.....
* The kind of student I can't stand is.....

3. *Pair Task*

* The Speaker:

  Choose one of the sentences and try to talk about your reasons for completing it as you did.

* The Understander:

  Listen actively to the speaker and try to make them feel well listened to. Look for opportunities to reflect what they are saying. You can either come in while they are talking or wait until they have finished.

* When you have finished change roles and try another sentence.

Appendix 2

I asked AH to write down some of his feelings about CD. He did this about three weeks after the last meeting we had, and before he read any of this paper so that it was independent of my interpretation. I also did not read his paper until I had completed this assignment so that I was not influenced by what he had to say.

"My initial reaction to the material was a little sceptical. My main reservations were that it could be difficult for the understander to be non-judgemental, and for the speaker to avoid the feeling that he/she was being "humoured". In addition, the influence of any preceding professional or personal relationship would, I thought, inevitably affect the interaction, not necessarily positively! However, as we worked through the activities I began to recognise the ways in which the suggested framework helped to focus the discussion and led to a more thoughtful and productive outcome.

The speaker, instead of 'seeking guidance' is exploring his/her own behaviour and examining the rationale which lies behind it. 'Self discovery' is putting it a bit strongly, but the tendency towards independence and self-development is one of the main strong points of the approach.

The understander's role was I think slightly more demanding. It involved an abandonment of the normal give and take of regular discussion, and therefore required considerable objectivity and self-monitoring. However, this was achieved fairly early on in the proceedings and worked well. Interestingly, several of the techniques

(reformulation of the speaker's utterances, asking for clarification etc) are similar to those used in teacher-student interaction, and although the roles (speaker/understander and student/teacher) are different, the overlap became evident when I began to reflect on the approach as a whole.

The ease with which we were able to reverse roles was, I think, due to our previous relationship. The approach required trust and respect, and while there may seem 'givers' in many teacher training relationships there is a lack of mutual trust, usually stemming from the internal politics which affect so many staffrooms. On the one hand, the speaker has to be relaxed enough to be completely open, and on the other the understander has to be sympathetic and non-judgemental.

I feel that the approach could be improved by suggesting more concrete 'outcomes'. By this I mean activities which take the development into the classroom via team teaching, peer observation and detailed feedback.

On the whole however, the approach was more productive than I had anticipated. It has promoted a (fairly) formal base from which Neil and I can continue to work together. Many teachers do good things by instinct. Knowing why they're good helps to replicate them and to identify shortcomings. In this way stagnation can be avoided and real progress achieved. The approach certainly helps this to happen."

Appendix 3

The following transcript is from the meeting we had to discuss goal setting. I have tried to record the words faithfully, but I have omitted much backchannelling such as 'mm' or 'uhuh', and I have made no attempt to incorporate paralinguistic features such as nodding, which are particularly important in attending skills for example. AH is the speaker talking about the kind of change he would like to make in his teaching (activity 11.1), and I am the understander trying to get him to set a specific goal for his students to be exposed to more varieties of English.

In bold type I have put letters indicating what skill of CD I think is being attempted. The code is as follows: F (focusing); GS (goal setting); R (reflecting); C (challenging); A (attending). In fact the majority of skills are goal setting ones which is not surprising as that is the focus of the chapter. There is also one example of the protocol we used to offer suggestions (P).

NC: if that's going to be very difficult are there any other things using the students in some way **F**

AH: yeah I mean the presentations part of the course is aimed at getting them to listen to structured language prepared by another student as opposed to spontaneous language mm(2.0)

NC: is that what you think they really need do they need to be able to be part of spontaneous conversations to to negotiate conversations **F**

AH: yeah oh yeah that's part of it

NC: yeah so is there some way that you increase that part of the lesson without bringing in outside people to expose them to other accents but increasing their own interaction in the lesson **F**

AH: yeah I can do more speaking activities it's basically more of the same you know er I can't think of a completely new activity that I haven't touched on before that would do that any more than I'm doing now

NC: perhaps it's perhaps it's not you can actually think of the activities now but as a goal you would like to introduce or do more speaking activities with them **GS**

AH: yeah

NC: ideally you'd like different people coming in but that's not possible **R**

AH: yeah well it's not impossible mm I mean one possibility is for Japanese professors to come into the class now there would be a reticence there the main problem with it is I'm not confident that that the Japanese professors and to a certain extent the students would know what I was on about why I was doing it and er so if I was going to attempt that the first thing would be to formalise it and er explain why I want to do that but as you know these things take time within the frameworks of this type of institution mm I mean it's a long term goal sorry medium term goal but

NC: so when would that medium term goal **GS**

AH: Easter

NC: oh well that's not far

AH: the difficulty lies in that even if everything goes smoothly it might not work so if they understand why I want to do it its arranged it involves scheduling it invoives a lot of work not only for me I don't mind the work but if I'm asking people to do things mm it's got to//

NC: so what's the first step in the process (3.0) **GS**

AH: this one (laughs) no I think thinking it through

NC: yeah

AH: and A deciding whether that was a good idea and worth doing and whether it's

practicable

NC: thinking it through by yourself or thinking it through with the students or thinking it through with colleagues who are going to come in **C**

AH: no by myself first thinking of whether I wanna attempt it er because for sort of political reasons in terms of here it's not a good idea to try and instigate something er different (2.0) unless you're pretty confident it's gonna work

NC: yeah

AH: you can never be 100% sure but if you're asking people to cooperate and stuff and come into your class I mean that's weird for a lot of Japanese professors

NC: yeah yeah definitely **A**

AH: I mean I've never even asked to go into any of their classes I'd wait to be invited of course but even for me to invite someone they'd think why and all that so I need to be confident enough that I'm going to be able to explain it to them and they're gonna understand it er first then do a trial with one of them

NC: right

AH: one good guy would be the Chinese guy who's leaving in 3 weeks

NC: can I just ask you why what ideas you've got for what those people would actually do in your class would they **F**

AH: I'd ask them to do a 5 minute presentation

NC: oh right right

AH: which is exactly the same as I'm asking the students to do

NC: right but what you said earlier about the students need more spontaneous interaction with people rather than // **C**

AH: yeah but there would be a question and answer session after that which would provide the interaction

NC: yeah

AH: I mean that's I mean the ideas come the idea I chose this question is Nick was in the class Monday and Wednesday the IMF group and the Oxford University Press guy a few weeks ago and I'd been analysing what happened in those sessions er like the students really enjoyed it er a change is as good as a rest and erm (2.0) the OUP guy enjoyed and Nick enjoyed it I mean he was actually advertising his seminar and talking about his seminar so I mean he had a kind of vested interest in that (3.0) I support any person who comes in it's not a one way thing they must get something out of it otherwise they won't do one for me or they won't be with you

NC: yeah

AH: so that's another area that's (4.0) what can they get out of it not what can the students get out of it

NC: I think that maybe a much harder area I mean what would a Japanese professor who has a certain status and a certain role want to erm come into another office another classroom and be exposed// **C**

AH: I think erm//

NC: what unless they think they feel it's a good chance to practice something

AH: yeah that's the reason that's why should but they might not see it I mean we're talking about the Japanese professors' standard of English here

NC: yeah

AH: so luckily I teach 3 or 4 of them right and I'm kind of thinking of putting it to 1 or 2 of them or maybe just 1 of them mm (1.0) because they've asked me how can I improve my lecturing techniques and they're preparing presentations for our class and stuff and one of them is very opposed to formally going in front of other students the other 3 are not so opposed to it that's my feeling they haven't actually said oh this guy has actually said he doesn't want to because he doesn't want to be exposed and he doesn't see the benefit of it so he wants to do the presentation in front of the other professors and me

NC: mm

AH: but by the time he does it next week I mean I'll have heard it about 6 times so it's not valuable it's not a real audience and I've made this point to the whole class but you know he's not

NC: yeah

AH: he's not responded to that so (3.0) the others might be alright

NC: so what you gonna do then just recap **GS**

AH: approach the professors (3.0) either native or non native speakers and (1.0) come up with a framework where in a given semester (1.0) the IMF group get at least 3 (2.0) I mean they go to a visiting lecturer you know go to listen to lectures and stuff er but they're very interested in the content there and the lectures are very long and it's pretty difficult especially if the lecture's boring to (1.0) actively listen (1.0) I want them to listen actively er so that's the reason for the brief period of the actual presentation cos then in 15 minutes you can do a presentation and 10 minute Q and A and they've got a fair amount of different levels of language practice done so if they can do that 3 or 4 times a semester that will do it

NC: so once a month **GS**

AH: that will achieve my goal (1.0) it's fine it doesn't matter actually if they overtly see what I'm trying to do or not

NC: yeah (2.0) so you're perhaps gonna think about this over Christmas and maybe try

and do **GS**

AH: yeah there are tapes of lectures but you know I use tapes all the time I use a lot of them but it's not the same and in the future they won't be listening to tapes

NC: mm

AH: there'll be people who'll say now have you got any questions so there'll be listening probably intensively and then having to interact immediately afterwards with that person (3.0) they'll need strategies like can you speak more slowly I'm sorry I didn't quite catch that and at the moment I think they're understanding very well so they're not practising that language and (2.0) I can create it artificially (1.0) we've done it you know classroom language

NC: yeah

AH: and they speak to each other but it's much better if it's real and they really don't understand and they really ask for and they really get you know

NC: if I can just step out of my understander role here and just say I'm sure you've got friends that stay with you occasionally and I have and maybe over the course of a semester an ad hoc opprtunity like Nick could come in you know just to talk to about themselves you know where they live or **P**

AH: yeah

NC: not something terribly threatening they don't have to prepare the latest the have

AH: yeah of course you'd be very welcome our accents are not particularly different

NC: yeah I wasn't thinking about myself although that would be fine it was other people (1.0) you know like your mum or something (laughs)

AH: but she couldn't just talk for 5 minutes they'd be jumping out of the window in the early evening you know aagh (laughs) (5.0)

NC: OK you act as an observer and say how you felt about (1.0) me trying to channel you into a goal

AH: yeah it was good cos mm (1.0) I was aware that you were constantly trying to channel me into a goal (laughs) er and (1.0) that made me aware that that I didn't have one (2.0) and in the end without you did a good job of rephrasing things so I didn't feel I felt I was being channelled rather than pushed

NC: yes

AH: because you didn't (2.0) yeah you did suggest more interactive speaking activities as a way of practising and that really wasn't what I was getting at you know

NC: fine

AH: but it made me realise that the 2 things are in tandem and could go together (3.0) when a visitor comes in to a class so yeah.